## WHAT IS HAM RADIO?

[Revised as of October 1, 1998]

TITLE 47--TELECOMMUNICATION COMMISSION PART 97--AMATEUR RADIO SERVICE

Subpart A--General Provisions Sec. 97.1 Basis and purpose.

The rules and regulations in this part are designed to provide an amateur radio service having a fundamental purpose as expressed in the following principles:

- (a) Recognition and enhancement of the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.
- (b) Continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art.
- (c) Encouragement and improvement of the amateur service through rules which provide for advancing skills in both the communication and technical phases of the art.
- (d) Expansion of the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians, and electronics experts.
- (e) Continuation and extension of the amateur's unique ability to enhance international goodwill.

## A BRIEF GUIDE TO RADIO RULES – emphasizing repeater etiquette

Amateur Radio Etiquette is more than obeying the law – it involves behavior and operating practice. Be courteous and considerate on the air – we take up valuable band space that companies want.

Be sure the frequency is "clear" before you transmit. When you turn to a repeater or a simplex frequency, listen for at least thirty seconds before transmitting.

"K-H-T," – "key, hesitate, talk." Push the microphone button, pause slightly, and then begin speaking. Otherwise, the first word or part of a word may be cut off. This does not facilitate effective communications.

On ham radio, "break" means an emergency. To join a conversation or request an opportunity to make a call, give your call sign during an opening. If you have an emergency, say "break, break."

Do not "tailgate" on the repeater. Do not key immediately after the courtesy tone has sounded (if there is one) but allow the repeater squelch trail to drop after each transmission (to prevent repeater time-outs), and leave regular pauses so that other stations have a chance to come in. If you do not allow pauses, a weak emergency transmission may not be able to get through.

Identify every 10 minutes and at the end of your conversation. Use the ITU phonetics for legal ID, not "amusing" made up ones. It is not necessary to add "for legal ID." *Never transmit without identifying.* This includes keying-up your microphone to test a repeater ("kerchunking").

Using the phrase "clear and monitoring" is not really necessary. Use "clear" only to mean that you are shutting down operation and will not be there to answer any subsequent calls. However, if you attempt to contact someone and there is no answer, you can notify others that you are finished by saying, "KF4xxx clear," or "no contact, this is KF4xxx clear W4IAX repeater."

Use plain language on a repeater. Q-signs are for HF communications – use sparingly on FM voice. Avoid CB-style jargon and terms.

There is no "s" in the salutation 73 (or 88).

When hosting third-party communications, a licensed ham must be the control operator, in direct control of the radio at all times, and the ham must ID according to the rules.

Use simplex rather than a repeater when possible for regular contacts between the same stations, or switch repeaters every so often during lengthy conversations. Also, remember that calling frequencies such as 146.52 simplex are not for conversation. Make contact and then move to another frequency.

If you hear an emergency call for help, stop your QSO immediately and do whatever you can to help. If you ever use non-ham bands for emergency communication, verify that it is truly an emergency, and keep a record of names, location, date and time, and the particulars of the situation for legal back-up in case anyone questions the validity of the emergency.